



LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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January 16, 2020

Senator Sara Howard, Chair
Health and Human Services Committee
District 9
State Capitol, Room 1510
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Reference: Support for LB 840

Dear Senator Howard and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

On behalf of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health, I am writing in support of LB 840 to amend the Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act (NCIAA) to include adding the definition of electronic smoking devices, adding prohibition of electronic smoking devices to the list of prohibited products in indoor public spaces and workplaces, and updating requirements for tobacco retail outlets.

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health supported the recent change in the Lincoln Smoking Regulation Act prohibiting the use of electronic smoking devices in all places of employment and indoor public places. Our Board felt strongly to act locally, but also believe a statewide policy is necessary to prevent more young people from starting use and to prevent exposure to secondhand aerosol for protecting the public's health. The health improvements being experienced in Lincoln, including better indoor air quality, an increase in healthy role-modeling, strengthening culture norms not to use vapor products and a potential reduction of youth initiation of vapor products; could all become statewide benefits.

As you may know, electronic cigarettes are not FDA-approved smoking quitting aids, and despite how they are marketed, they are not proven to help people quit. The devices closely resemble and purposefully mimic the act of smoking by having users inhale vaporized liquid that typically contains nicotine, heated through an electronic ignition system. Studies are showing that people exposed to secondhand aerosol absorb nicotine (measured as cotinine) at levels comparable to passive smokers. In addition, similar to smoke and secondhand smoke from cigarettes and other tobacco products, secondhand aerosol contains ultrafine particles and toxins that are known to cause cancer.



With this change to the NCIAA, Nebraska would join 21 other states which have already restricted electronic smoking device usage in 100% smoke-free venues, along with almost 900 municipalities.

I urge you, Senators, safeguard Nebraskans by supporting state legislation to prevent exposure to secondhand aerosol and keep youth from starting to best protect the public's health.

Respectfully,

James Michael Bowers
President, Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health

cc: Lancaster County Senators
Pat Lopez, City of Lincoln
Jennifer Brinkman, City of Lincoln
Eric Gerrard, City of Lincoln
